

October 20, 2011

## **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Personnel Committee met Thursday, October 20, 2011 at 6:00 p.m., in the Quorum Court Meeting Room, Third Floor, County Administration Building, 215 East Central, Bentonville.

Committee Members Present: Sandlin, Allen, Harrison, Blaty, Carr, Moore

Others Present: County Judge Bob Clinard, JPs Douglas, Winscott, King, Hawkins and Curry, County Clerk Tena O'Brien, Treasurer Deanna Ratcliffe, Collector Gloria Peterson, Coroner Daniel Oxford, Comptroller Richard McComas, Juvenile Director Dennis Cottrell, Human Resources Manager Barbara Ludwig, Administrator of General Service Elizabeth Bowen, Chief Deputy Don Townsend, Information Systems Director Sidney Reynolds

Media: Tom Sissom – Benton County Daily Record

JP Sandlin called the meeting to order.

### **Public Comments:**

None

### **New Business**

#### **A. Salary Study Presentation – Blair Johanson, Johanson Group**

Blair Johanson, President of Johanson Group of Fayetteville presented the findings of the market salary study for Benton County. He stated that the study shows that the majority of employees are within their actual pay structure. He stated that the market pay study is a combination of municipalities' data from cities within Northwest Arkansas; other counties including Pulaski, Sebastian, Craighead, and Washington, and private data from the NOARK study, which is a combination of both public and private entities that provide data each year in an annual study. He stated that the county's salary has become skewed in recent years when compared with both other governmental entities and private business. He reported that the municipal study was almost 7% above the county, and that the NOARK study, the combination of both public and private entities, was at 4.8% ahead of the county. He added that with the market data, with Washington and Craighead counties averaged in, that Benton County's overall market variance is at 2.2% behind the market average and that Benton County needs to consider the 2.2% cost-of-living raises and merit raises. He stated that the variance against the market average for the professional non-graded positions shows a few positions that are below the market on the average, and added that there are a few, which, because of the variance to the market, need to be addressed.

Blair Johanson reported that the Elected Officials salary survey comparison shows that the Elected Officials' group is at 74% to 75% of the state maximum, and the other two class 7 counties, Washington

and Pulaski, are at 81% to 87% percent of the state maximum. He stated that Washington County decided to go to the 85% of the state maximum for their Elected Officials. He reported that Benton County's employees' costs share on the medical premium is much better than the other counties. Johanson stated that based on the compensation study, taking into consideration both the compensation and the benefits, that his recommendations are as follows: 1) Match the market variance of 2.2% with a COLA increase, and adjust the ranges so that they match up with the market; 2) Budget and allocate between 1.5% to 3.3% for employee base pay merit and that the combination of the two would be about 3.7% to 5% for the COLA adjustment and merit; 3) Make structural adjustments to pay grades at the higher levels to address pay compression issues and to better match with market pay means. JP Allen asked what geographic area was used in defining the market. Blair Johanson stated that they are looking at the immediate market, similar types of organizations, and the Department of Labor study. JP Allen stated that he is interested in how much the positions are being paid in other counties, but that he is more concerned about how much positions are being paid in Bentonville, Rogers, Benton County, Washington County, and the private employers. JP Winscott stated that he is surprised that there is not a bigger gap with where they are presently, and that the upper grades show that they are trailing the market. He added that specific areas that need to be addressed are the upper end of the salary structure, Elected Officials' salaries, and especially the Coroner's Office pay structure.

Lengthy discussion was held on the market study with the market averages and Benton County being classified as a Class 7 because of the population increase, and where to make a sufficient adjustment to the pay structure, and not the actual pay adjustment.

#### **B. Recommendations for Salary Range Adjustment – Barbara Ludwig**

Human Resources Manager Barbara Ludwig stated that in addition to looking at the data that the Johanson Group has provided, that the City of Bentonville had also done a salary study using ranges as opposed to specific salaries and that she has analyzed both studies. She stated that currently our salary structure is at 3% between each grade. She stated that she recommended changing the salary ranges and adding an additional 5% increase to the mid-management positions which are grades 15 through 19, and a 10% increase for upper management, which are grades 20 and above. She added that a lot of the professional positions that have been outside of the grading system will now fit into the grading system.

Further discussion held on the professional position salaries and the upper grading system.

#### **C. Discussion of Elected Officials' Salaries and Change in Coroner's Salary**

JP Sandlin stated that currently the County Clerk, Collector, Treasurer, Assessor are all paid exactly the same, but not the same as the County Judge, Sherriff, or the Coroner.

Barbara Ludwig stated that state legislation automatically increases the minimum to maximum pay range 3% every two years. She added that if the salaries are set at a percentage verses an actual dollar amount, that the range will still change 3 percent every other year.

Barbara Ludwig stated that going from a Class 6 to Class 7 county made a major difference in the Coroner's salary range, because the salary range in a Class 7 county is equal to the other elected officials' salary ranges. She added that Washington County gave their Coroner the same salary increase as the rest of their employees, which increased the Coroner's salary to \$51,143. JP Allen stated that the

Coroner's position needs to be paid more no matter who is in it, but that he could not support raising the Coroner's salary to a level equal to the other elected officials in one fell swoop.

Barbara Ludwig reported that there is quite a diverse difference among the counties in the way they pay their Quorum Court members, and that the new maximum is at \$13,000 annually.

Comptroller Richard McComas stated the budget that is being brought forth to the budget finance meeting next week contains an increase of the same percentage amount for elected officials as that being proposed for the employees.

JP Allen stated giving 5% to the elected officials would increase their salary to \$77,265 per year and \$83,070 for the Sheriff and the County Judge. JP Moore stated that since it is an elected position, it would be better to do a certain percentage every term, instead of every year.

JP Allen stated that he wanted to focus on the Coroner, who now makes \$45,600, and suggested increasing the salary \$16,000 this year to \$61,600. JP Carr stated that would be about 62% of the state maximum and that was a good starting point to try to bring the gap back together.

JP Allen made motion to forward a discussion and approval of increasing the Coroner's salary to \$61,600 in the 2012 Budget to the October 25, 2011 Finance/Budget Committee meeting, seconded by JP Carr.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

JP Moore suggested that the elected official's salary be increased 6% for a two year term, which would be a stand-alone percent for the next term. JP Carr stated that would put the elected officials at 80% of the state maximum for the County Clerk, Circuit Clerk, Collector, Treasurer and Assessor, and 81% for the Sheriff and County Judge. JP Allen asked if that would mean no special raise for the 2012 Budget for elected officials, but would include any COLA or merit raise. JP Moore stated this would be a Class 7 adjustment, a stand-alone increase, and that any COLA or other adjustments done this year would be on top of the 6% increase.

Richard McComas stated that if any kind of increase is put into effect in 2012, along with what the committee awards for 2012, then they will get 6% on top of that for 2013, and that would stay in effect for the 2013-2014 term, until another adjustment in the range is made.

JP Moore made motion for a 6% percent salary adjustment for all elected officials for the 2013-2014 terms to be forwarded to the October 25, 2011 Finance/Budget Committee meeting for discussion, seconded by JP J. Harrison.

JP Allen asked if the specific dollar amount they discussed for the Coroner would be affected by this 6% adjustment.

Richard McComas stated the \$16,600 increase for the coroner goes into effect next year, and then there will be a 6% increase on top of that for the 2013-2014 term, plus any other adjustments.

Treasurer Deanna Ratcliffe stated that in 2008, the Quorum Court approved setting elected officials' salaries at 95% of the state salary maximum, and the range was increased 3% when the new law took effect on January 1, 2011. She stated that the raise that the elected officials were given in 2008 was the last raise that the elected officials have received, because the Quorum Court decided not continue with the practice of using the percentage of the state range for the elected officials, so they did not receive the salary adjustments that elected officials in other counties received.

JP Allen stated that the committee wants to hear what the elected officials are thinking, and that they are welcome to come to any of the Finance Committee meetings.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

JP Sandlin stated that the elected officials will need to be at the Finance/Budget Committee meetings.

#### **D. Schedule 4 – Reductions/Modifications**

##### **1) County Clerk – Dept 02**

**Delete Archivist/Record Manager (Professional)**

**Add Records Manager – Grade 8**

**Change Election Coordinator from grade 15 to 13**

Barbara Ludwig stated the County Clerk is deleting the Archivist/Record Manager and adding a Records Manager at Grade 8, and lowering the Election Coordinator position that is now under the County Clerks' office from a grade 15 to grade 13.

##### **2) Circuit Clerk – Dept 03**

**Change Records Manager from Grade 7 to Grade 8**

Barbara Ludwig stated that the Circuit Clerk's office is changing the Records Manager position from Grade 7 to Grade 8, so that it will be equal with the same position in the Prosecutor's Office.

##### **3) Assessor – Dept 07**

**Delete Statistician (Professional)**

**Delete Appraiser – Level IV (Grade 8)**

**Delete Assistant to the Project Manager (Grade 8)**

**Delete (2) Deputy Assessor II's (Grade 6)**

**Delete (2) Deputy Assessor I's (Grade 5)**

**Add Appraiser – Level IV/Special Projects (Grade 13)**

**Add CAMA/Special Projects Coordinator (Grade 9)**

Barbara Ludwig stated that the Assessor is: 1) Deleting the Statistician position which is currently a Professional position and dividing the work among two other employees; 2) Deleting Appraiser – Level IV; 3) Deleting Assistant to the Project Manager; 4) Deleting two (2) Deputy Assessor II's (Grade 6); 5) Deleting two (2) Deputy Assessor I's (Grade 5); 6) Adding one Appraiser- Level IV/Special Projects (Grade 13) position that will be picking up part of the work of the Statistician position; 7) Adding one CAMA /Special Projects Coordinator (Grade 9) who will be producing the reports.

##### **4) Juvenile Probation – Dept. 20**

**Delete Legal Secretary I (Grade 6)**

**Add Court Orders Clerk/Legal Secretary (Grade 7)**

Barbara Ludwig stated that this change does not involve any changes in salary; currently the position is a Legal Secretary I (Grade 6), and the JESAP Committee has recommended grading this position as a Court Orders Clerk/Legal Secretary (Grade 7).

**5) 9-1-1 Administration – Dept. 63**

**Change title from “9-1-1 Operations Manager” to “Director of 9-1-1- Operations”**

Barbara Ludwig stated this is a title change only and no change in grade.

**6) CENCOM – Dept. 68**

**Change “Supervisor – CENCOM” to “Public Safety Dispatch Supervisor”**

**Change “Telecommunicator” to “Public Safety Dispatch II”**

**Change “Call Taker” to “Public Safety Dispatch I”**

Barbara Ludwig explained that these are just title changes only and not changes in grades. JP Allen asked if the salary changes when grades are changed if someone is already in that position. Barbara stated that it is not an automatic change. She said when there is not a lot of additional work added, it is just a job description that has been graded differently and given a different title. Barbara Ludwig stated that when the re-organizations are presented, it is usually reducing the budget.

JP Carr made motion to approve the proposed Schedule 4 changes and forward to the November 8, 2011 Committee of Thirteen agenda, seconded by JP J. Harrison.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

**E. Reorganizations and Wage Adjustment Requests**

**1) County Clerk – Tena O’ Brien**

County Clerk Tena O’Brien stated that she is seeking a wage adjustment for her Administrative Assistant who has had to take on additional duties in learning the Election Coordinator’s job. She stated that she is asking to move her from 90% to mid-point of the pay scale, which will result in an increase of \$4,388.

JP Allen asked if the Administrative Assistant will still have the additional duties once the Election Coordinator position is filled. Tena O’Brien stated that she will still have the additional duties and that the Election Coordinator will report to her.

Further discussion was held on the wage adjustment request and the additional duties added to the Administrative Assistant’s position.

JP Carr made motion to accept and forward the wage adjustment request to the October 25, 2011 Finance/Budget Committee, seconded by JP Moore.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

**2) Assessor – Glen “Bear” Chaney**

**Delete Statistician**

**Delete (1) Appraisers – Level I-V**

**Delete Assist. To Project Manager**

**Delete Deputy Assessor Level II**

**Delete Deputy Assessor Level I**

**Add CAMA/Special Projects Coordinator**

**Add Appraiser – Level IV/Special Projects**

**Add Salary Adjustments (Internal Market Equity)**

**Unfund (2) Deputy Assessor II**

Barbara Ludwig stated that the Assessor has looked at how he can reduce the number of staff and reorganize his staffing to be more effective. She stated that Deputy Assessors I, II, and III are people that work in the personal property/business and real estate departments, and that he is cross training these people to do both. She stated that there are two (2) other positions that the Assessor would like to keep on Schedule 4 but they will not be funded except for insurance. She stated that all of the changes will result in a reduction to the Assessor's budget of \$263,735.72. She added that there are two wage adjustments – one for a Deputy Assessor II and one for a Real Estate Appraiser-Level IV. She said an analysis was done comparing the positions against the current employees in that area and they have determined that these two positions were slightly below the others, so they are recommending these salary adjustments.

JP Moore made motion to accept and forward the request to the October 25, 2011 Finance/Budget Committee meeting, seconded by JP J. Harrison.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

#### **F. New Positions – County Judge**

##### **1. Part-Time Staff, Judge's Office (Dept. 1) – County Judge**

Administrator of General Services Elizabeth Bowen stated this part-time staff person will be assisting in the judge's office, and that currently his executive secretary is working with the construction contracts for the Public Service Facility and the Westside Road Department. She stated that additional help is needed for answering phones and performing basic office duties. She added that the Human Resources Department has been able to staff the position out of the part-time pool, but they really need the same person to perform the duties every day, and that this would be on average 20-hours per week per year. JP Allen asked if this person would be supporting the new Director of Facilities and Construction Management. Elizabeth Bowen stated that the county judge's secretary would be working with the new Director and the part-time person would be doing basic office duties.

##### **2. 1.5 Juvenile Detention Workers (Dept. 35) – Dennis Cottrell**

Juvenile Director Dennis Cottrell stated this request is for one full time and one part-time position for the new Juvenile Justice Center. He stated this request will add a third position for the night shift, as a supervisor, and that the part time position would cover the two days when the supervisor is off. He added that this third person is needed at night for safety reasons.

#### **G. New Positions – Sheriff**

##### **1. Five (5) Deputy Sheriffs/Courthouse Security**

##### **2. Lieutenant – CID**

Chief Don Townsend stated that three of the positions are for County Administration Building security and two are for security at the Juvenile Justice Center. He stated that a proposal was made at a security meeting with the county judge and elected officials to put a metal detector in the lobby of the County Administration building, and those three additional deputies will be needed to operate and maintain it. He added that the U.S. Marshall's Office recommended additional security in the evaluation that they recently performed.

Don Townsend stated that the Sheriff's office has had to increase the undercover narcotics division and the cyber crimes kiddie porn division. He stated that the Lieutenant – CID position is for an upper level supervisor position.

Captain Mike Sydoriak stated the Lieutenant – CID position would be filled by the sergeant who currently is doing the computer forensic work, and that he does not have the time to work with the investigators on a full time basis. He stated that everyone will move up and that the new sergeant will work with the investigators, which will help improve the division.

### **Ranking of Requests**

Richard McComas stated the ranking positions are one (1) to nine (9) with “1” being the position ranked as the highest priority.

Richard McComas reported the results of the ranking of the requests for new positions:

- 1) Juvenile Detention Worker
- 2) Lieutenant – CID
- 3) Sheriff Deputy
- 4) Sheriff Deputy
- 5) Sheriff Deputy
- 6) Sheriff Deputy
- 7) Part-time Staff Assistant
- 8) Sheriff Deputy
- 9) Sheriff Deputy

### **Old Business**

None

### **Other Business**

None

Meeting adjourned at 8:50.